

# Biography of Congressman Steve Israel

Congressman Steve Israel represents New York's Second Congressional District, which includes all of the Town of Huntington and large portions of Babylon, Islip, Oyster Bay and Smithtown.

At the outset of the 108th Session of Congress, the Democratic Caucus tapped him for a leadership position, naming Israel Assistant Whip. Newsday recently included Israel among eight national "Rising Stars" -- a list that also included New York City Mayor Bloomberg, Attorney General Spitzer and General Tommy Franks. Israel's leadership in the House includes organizing and leading the House Democratic Study Group on National Security. Three centrist Democrats founded the group to explore new technologies and principles leading to a smarter national security capability against changing threats. Israel's other House leadership roles include co-chairing the Long Island Sound Caucus and the House Cancer Caucus.

Israel was first elected to the House in 2000 with 48 percent of the vote and was re-elected in 2002 with nearly 60 percent of the vote. Throughout his tenure, he has forged a reputation as a bipartisan, independent and highly effective Congressman.

- *In Israel's first term, he passed more measures in the House than any other new Democratic Member of Congress, including:*
- *The Israel-Johnson Act, which would stop the exodus of Medicare HMOs from Long Island by reforming federal reimbursement rates;*
- *The Israel-DeLauro "Save Our Woman From Ovarian Cancer Act" to accelerate federal research into new technologies to diagnose ovarian cancer;*

The Israel Amendment to create an advisory group of fire, rescue and emergency services personnel in the new federal Homeland Security Department.

Additionally, Israel secured over \$40 million in appropriations to expand jobs, reduce crime and protect the environment throughout New York's Second Congressional District, this included more than \$28 million to protect and create new jobs in Long Island's defense industry.

At the outset of his second term, Israel secured a spot on the House Armed Service Committee. The committee oversees all aspects of the United States military, including procurement, transformation and modernization, personnel issues and national defense and security. Despite the strong defense presence on Long Island, it has not been represented on the committee since Rep. George Hochbrueckner left in 1994. As the only New York Democrat on the Committee, Israel is leading efforts to strengthen our ability to counter changing threats and advocating for the contributions to our national defense

made by Long Island's skilled workforce. This assignment is important for strengthening both national security and local economic security.

Israel also serves on the prestigious House Financial Services Committee, where he plays a leading role in expanding home ownership and the economy, protecting investors, and safeguarding the rights of consumers who utilize banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions. The committee unanimously passed Israel's amendment to crackdown on financial links between ostensible charities in the U.S. and international terrorist groups.

Congressman Israel serves in the House Blue Dog Caucus - a group of thirty-seven independent Democratic Members who are generally moderate on fiscal issues. There, he chairs the Blue Dog Task Force on Foreign Policy. He also serves on the New Democratic Caucus, and was appointed by the House Democratic leadership to the Homeland Security Task Force, where he took a leading role in advancing new technologies to protect against terrorist attacks. He organized the Suffolk County Task Force on Emergency Preparedness, which worked on coordinated responses to emergencies by fire departments, police forces, emergency medical teams, hospitals, health professionals and school administrators. Three days after the 9/11 attacks, President Bush selected Israel to join him at Ground Zero.